

Bombay High Court Bars Use Of Pavana River Water For Pune IPL Matches

The Maharashtra cricket body said an agreement with the irrigation department allowed it to draw 2.5 lakh litres of water from the Pavana river



The high court was hearing a petition filed by Loksatta Movement, a non-profit

Mumbai: In a setback to the Maharashtra Cricket Association (MCA), the Bombay High Court today said water from the Pavana river will not be used for maintaining the Pune cricket stadium for the current edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) till further orders.

The interim stay came during the hearing of a petition filed by Loksatta Movement, a non-profit, in 2016 that had challenged the use of water for IPL matches when parts of Maharashtra faced an acute drinking water crisis.

During the hearing last week, the petitioner pointed out that six IPL matches that were scheduled to be held in Chennai had now [been shifted to Pune due to protests](#) over the delay in setting up the Cauvery management board.

The high court had asked the MCA to file a reply on how it would manage water for the matches to be held in Pune.

Today the cricket body said it had an agreement with the Maharashtra irrigation department, according to which it could draw 2.5 lakh litres of water daily from the Pavana river.

The petitioner opposed this, saying the river caters to the drinking water and sanitation needs of Pune and adjoining districts besides supplying water for irrigation.

"Our stand is that water should be used according to the Maharashtra water policy. It prioritises the use of water --- drinking water and sanitation come first, then come agriculture and irrigation followed by industrial and recreational activities," the petitioner's lawyer, Rakesh Singh, told NDTV.

The court asked for a copy of the agreement that was signed in 2012, which mentioned that water was allocated to the MCA for "industrial activity".

What sort of industrial activity are you into, the court asked the cricket body that has filed an affidavit earlier saying IPL was for recreational purpose.

The court then barred the state government from supplying any water from the river to the cricket association till further orders.

Two years ago, [the high court had ordered](#) that all IPL 2016 matches scheduled to be played in drought-hit Maharashtra after April 30 be moved out.